

**Bromsgrove District Council
Planning Committee**

**Committee Updates
9th October 2025**

24/00960/FUL Land off Illey Lane, Hunnington

The presentation slide on page 94 of the Committee Agenda relating to Fire Safety is the original version. This will be replaced by the correct version of the plan for the purposes of the Officer presentation to the committee.

Following publication of the report. Two statements regarding fire safety and other matters have been sent to members of the Planning Committee, by the applicant Grenergy on 3rd October and Hunnington Parish Council on 8th October.

Grenergy

The Grenergy Briefing Note outlines that:

- The Government supports BESS for achieving net-zero goals; fires at BESS sites are less likely than at other buildings.
- The Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) utilize lithium-ion technology, with a low failure rate (1 in 40 million).
- Fire Mitigation Measures include a Battery Management System, temperature management, and 24/7 monitoring.
- Fire Response, will include a controlled burn strategy with boundary cooling; onsite water supply of 1,900 l/min.
- Contaminated Firewater: Attenuation basin to manage runoff, ensuring safe disposal.
- Toxic Smoke Risk will be minimal due to distance from occupied dwellings or approximately 190m.

Hunnington Parish Council

Hunnington Parish Council outlines reasons why the Goodrest Farm application should be refused and can be summarised as follows:

1. Fire Safety Concerns

- Access Points Misrepresented: Only one access point is provided, not two as claimed. The second is an internal gate and does not meet NFCC standards.
- Inadequate Container Separation: NFCC requires 6m separation between containers. The proposed layout only meets this between clusters, not individual units.
- Fire Safety and No Further Comments Misleading: HWFRS responses lack scrutiny, especially regarding deflagration and venting risks.
- Precedent from Lincomb BESS Refusal: A similar application refused by Wychavon District Council due to emergency access and container spacing issues.
- Conditions Cannot Resolve Core Issues: Post-consent conditions are contrary to NFCC/HWFRS expectations and planning best practices.

2. Oversupply of BESS and Redundancy of “Very Special Circumstances”

- Shift in officer’s Position on “Need”: Initially deemed irrelevant, now cited based on EN-1 and CP30 strategy.

- Misapplication of EN-1: EN-1 applies to NSIPs, not local planning decisions, and cannot override Green Belt protections under NPPF.
- Government Targets vs. Deliverable Capacity:
UK: 2030 target is 27.1 GW; deliverable capacity is 68.05 GW (+151%)
Midlands: 2030 target is 4.3 GW; deliverable capacity is 8.0 GW (+86%)
- Cornwall Insight Analysis: Shows 61 GW in BESS queue by 2030 and 129 GW by 2035.
- Green Belt Impact: Three BESS sites within one mile, including one just 500m away, undermining the argument for “very special circumstances”.

Officer Response

It is considered that the published committee report outlines in detail the Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service comments on the proposal. Following discussions with HWFRS, the applicant and the LPA, it has been concluded in Section 20.22 that there is no compelling evidence to demonstrate that the facility would be hazardous or incompatible with its location. There is no clear reason within the submitted evidence that illustrates why the facility would be especially vulnerable to the risk of fire.

In relation to need, further comment has been provided regarding this matter in Section 11.32

As outlined in section 11.7-11.39 of the report, the site is considered to be grey belt. Development on grey belt land can be approved without needing "very special circumstances," provided they meet certain criteria. This is considered in detail within this section.

25/00055/OUT 39 Parish Hill, Bournheath

To clarify, the PIP application the subject of the recent appeal relates to a permission in principle. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that this is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development.

The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages: the first stage (or ‘permission in principle’ stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in principle and the second (‘technical details consent’) stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed.

The recent appeal relates to the first of these 2 stages. Under the terms of the Town and Country planning (permission in principle) Order 2017 (the Order) (as amended) the scope of the considerations for permission in principle is limited to location, land use and the amount of development permitted. All other matters are considered as part of a subsequent technical details consent application if permission in principle is granted. The appeal was determined accordingly.

Indicative plans were submitted with the appeal. The Inspector had regard to them but acknowledged that they are not definitive and the scheme at the technical details consent stage could change.

As all detailed matters are subject to separate technical details consent, no conditions were attached to the permission in principle.

To clarify, the PIP appeal established the principle of developing the site the subject of the application for two dwellings. The PIP did not set the indicative plan, including details matters relating to matters of siting, scale, design and layout of the two dwellings.

Additional comments submitted from 2 residents, summarised as follows:-

- Note that a streetscene has been provided for Parish Hill but have concerns that the proposal will impact residents on Dodford Road due to the difference in levels.

- Note that the roof design has been changed to reduce the mass, however, the resulting appearance is then that of an urban house and not a design which is compatible with the local vernacular.
- The proposed site layout plan illustrates the whole building plot for the two new proposed dwellings as being similar in size to that of No 44 Parish Hill opposite and other single dwellings nearby. The plot density is therefore too intensive in this locality.
- Section shows height of dwellings would exceed height of 44 Parish Hill, opposite. The scale of this property is cottage style with a low profile. A preference would be that these dwellings be of a similar scale.
- Dwellings will overlook garden area of 42 Parish Hill.

Officers would advise that the proposal complies with the spacing requirements set out in the Council's High Quality Design SPD and as such the proposals will not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring occupiers of Parish Hill and Dodford Road in respect to general amenity.

In respect to the scale and design of the development, the Planning Inspector for the PIP appeal noted on their site visit, and concluded in the appeal decision, *that the scale of the houses in the area varies considerably and the differences in the design of the dwellings also contributes towards the varied character of the area where no one building style dominates.*

Officers consider that the design, scale and mass of the dwellings is acceptable in this location and will add to the varied character of housing in the area.

Amendment to the following condition:

4 The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the plans/documents:-

- Location plan Dwg. No. SL-1-01A
- Proposed site layout SL-2-01A
- House type A floorplans Dwg. No. 2-101
- Housetype A elevations Dwg. No. 2-201 Rev. B
- Garage details Dwg. No. 2-202
- Longitudinal site section Dwg. No. 55-1-2
- Streetscene Dwg. No. SS-1-1 A
- Proposed Drainage Strategy Dwg. No. MCC-C-D-501 Revision A06

Reason: To provide certainty to the extent of the development hereby approved in the interests of proper planning.